

U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal
Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens

Opposition Demonstrations Called for Friday, February 17th and Saturday, February 18th

February 17, 2012

This message is to inform U.S. citizens in Senegal that the “M23” opposition movement has called for demonstrations at the Place de l’Indépendance in downtown Dakar to start from the end of Friday prayers this afternoon, Feb. 17th. The government’s ban on demonstrations and protests in the downtown area is still in effect, and as witnessed in demonstrations earlier this week, security forces will use tear gas to disburse protests. Although the Place de l’Indépendance is the likely location for demonstrations, protests could erupt at various locations throughout the city without advance notice. The opposition movement has also called for demonstrations to continue on Saturday, February 18th, although times and locations are unspecified at this time.

Given the uncertainty of exactly when and how large the demonstrations may be, U.S. citizens are encouraged to exercise caution if traveling in Dakar (to include the Place de l’Indépendance, Place de l’Obélisque, Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop, and VDN) on Friday and to use caution when traveling about on Saturday. Demonstrations could quickly turn violent. Stay tuned to media reports, maintain situational awareness, consider alternate travel routes in case of blockage and avoid demonstrations should you come upon them.

You can stay in touch and get Embassy updates by checking the U.S. Embassy Dakar web site (<http://dakar.usembassy.gov/>). You can also get global updates at the U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs website where you can find the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warning, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information (http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1013.html). If you don't have internet access, you can get current information on safety and security by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States, or for callers from other countries, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

If you are going to live in or travel to Senegal or Guinea-Bissau, please take the time to tell us about your trip by enrolling in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP - <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>). If you enroll, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. You should remember to keep all of your information in STEP up to date. It is important during enrollment or updating of information to include your current phone number and current email address where you can be reached in case of an emergency.

The U.S. Embassy in Dakar is located on at Avenue Jean XXIII, Dakar; the mailing address is B.P. 49, Dakar, Senegal. If you have questions or concerns about safety or related issues, you are encouraged to contact the consular section at the Embassy by sending an email message to

consulardakar@state.gov . The Embassy telephone number is +221 33 829-2100. For After Hours Emergency, please call Tel: 33-829-2209 and ask to speak to the duty officer.